U.S. Builds Cabana, Fence For 'Presidential Security'

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SAN CLEMENTE, Calif. (AP) — The federal government has spent more than $100,000 for improvements at President Nixon's San Clemente estate since he bought it four years ago, records show.

Most of the work was done in the name of presidential security. Much of it, however, has enhanced the value of the oceanside property owned by Nixon and one of his wealthy friends, New York industrialist Robert Abplanalp.

The federal investment of more than $100,000 was disclosed in city building permit records and in subsequent interviews with government officials. The figure is nearly three times the $39,525 which the White House said during the weekend the government had spent for improvements at the estate.

The federally financed improvements included the beach cabana, a redwood fence, a storage shed, and an electric heating system for the President's home.

These improvements are in addition to the $123,514 which the White House said last week the Nixons have spent for improvements on their house and homesite.

When asked about the federal expenditures, the White House said Sunday: "All of the work done at the western White House as listed in the AP story was requested by the Secret Service for the protection of the President. If the Associated Press has a recommendation to make to the Secret Service as to how the President and his family should be protected, the AP should outline those suggestions at the same time that it carries a story which implies that the President has improved his property at the expense of the government."

A spokesman for the Secret Service in Washington said of the listings: "We recommended all of those items for the compound."

The White House would not provide a breakdown on the $123,514 figure it gave on Friday in a statement disclosing that Nixon had sold all but 5.9 acres of the 29-acre tract to Abplanalp in December, 1970.

The complex transaction took place 18 months after Abplanalp had loaned Nixon $625,000 to help him with the initial purchase of the property adjacent to a Coast Guard station where the western White House now is located.

That 1969 loan was cancelled in the subsequent transaction which left Nixon with a net investment of $374,514 for the house and 5.9 acres and Abplanalp with an investment of $1.2 million for the rest of the property.

The entire tract, including the portion owned by Abplanalp, remains under Secret Service guard. And while the White House won't say specifically which portion of the overall tract is now owned by Abplanalp, it is apparent that some of the federally financed improvements are on land he currently owns.

An examination of records in

the city of San Clemente's building department and subsequent interviews with White House and other federal officials disclosed that the improvements included:

—A $42,500 eight-foot-tall brick and concrete block wall stretching for about 1,400 feet around three sides of the property. The White House did not

See CABANA, Page A-5

CABANA

(Continued From Page A-1)

include the wall in its accounting of federally financed improvements, saying most of it was on Coast Guard property. But city officials say building permits are not required for work on federal property, and one was obtained for the wall.

—An $11,561 six-foot redwood fence that extends for about 800 feet between the Nixon-Abplanalp property and the beach.

—A $13,500 electric heating system in the Nixon home, a replacement for the previous heating system which officials deemed a "security risk."

—A $12,964 glass wind screen installed alongside the President's swimming pool. The glass is one and one-fourth inches thick and is bullet proof.

—A $3,360 storage shed with stucco walls to blend into the architecture of the President's estate.

—A $2,000 cabana on the beach beneath Nixon's house near a redwood crossover on the railroad tracks separating the beach from the estate. The crossover is complete with small red warning lights to signal if a train is approaching.

—Asphalt paving costing $1,500 to link the President's home with the adjacent western White House.

—Three gazebos and a gatehouse costing an estimated $22,000 and used by security personnel who guard the presidential property.